

COMMISSION COMMENTS

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Attention Veterans – Rule Change for Preference Points

The Civil Service Commission recently approved changes to Rule VII (E) regarding veteran's preference points for City of Columbus Civil Service tests. Consistent with Federal law changes regarding reserve service after September 11, 2001, you can now receive extra points added to your passing exam score if you meet one of the following conditions:

1. you have served on active military duty for more than 180 days in the Armed Forces (other than the Reserves or National Guard) and have been discharged or released from the military under honorable conditions;
2. you have served on active military duty as a member of a Reserve component during a period of war or in an expedition for which a campaign badge was authorized and have been discharged or released from the military under honorable conditions; or
3. you were a member of a Reserve component (including the Army or Air National Guard) who served on active military duty for a period of more than 180 consecutive days any part of which occurred after September 11, 2001 and were discharged or released for such duty under honorable condition.

If you meet one of these three conditions and provide documentation of your eligibility, five (5) points will be added to your **passing** exam score. Disabled veterans who have a service-connected disability rated ten percent (10%) or higher may be eligible for disabled veteran's preference of a total of ten (10) points.



Note that veteran's preference points are applicable on open competitive exams, but are not awarded on promotional exams for current City employees. Also, you can only use the points one time. If you use your veteran's points when hired by the City, you cannot use them again for Civil Service tests for other jobs with the City of Columbus.

To obtain these points, you must check the appropriate box on the application when applying for a competitive exam. You must submit proof of your military service, typically a Form DD214 (Member 4), to the Commission **no later than the final day of testing**. If you are applying for Disabled veteran's preference, you must submit an award letter from the Department of Veterans' Affairs or applicable military service stating the percent of testing, then submit a DD214 by the date the eligible list is established for the job class. If you are still on active duty you must provide proof of current military service by the final day of testing, then submit a DD214 by the date the eligible list is established for the job class.

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"Excellence is to do a common thing in an uncommon way."
– Booker T. Washington

Civil Service Commission Overview

Many City of Columbus employees and applicants only have contact with the Civil Service Commission when initially applying for jobs. However, the Commission has a variety of functions in addition to accepting applications for employment. The City Charter assigns certain responsibilities to the Commission in several areas.

What We Do

The Commission maintains the City's class plan which provides the framework for hiring and work assignments within the City. The Commission is responsible for creating, revising, and abolishing job classifications. Job classes are reviewed on a regular basis, every five years, because of changes in technology and changes in the needs of City agencies. All changes to job classifications must be approved by the Civil Service Commission at one of its public meetings.

Applicant Testing: The City Charter specifies that the Commission test for jobs in the classified service. The Commission staff develops and administers exams which are designed to measure the important knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform City jobs. Civil Service tests can be in various formats including written, performance, training and experience, oral, or other types of exams depending on the nature of the job. The Commission then establishes lists of eligible candidates for a job class based on the exam results.

Hiring: The Commission also handles applications for City jobs which involves preparing and posting job openings and exams, accepting and processing applications, and reviewing applicants' qualifications. When vacancies occur, the Commission staff certifies names of eligible individuals to City agencies for hiring. Personnel files are also maintained by the Commission.

Payroll/Personnel Actions: Another responsibility given to the Commission by the City Charter is payroll verification. No employee can be paid until the Commission certifies that the employee was hired and is still employed in accordance with the Charter and Commission Rules.

Appeals/Hearings: The Commission is made up of three Commissioners who are appointed by the Mayor. In addition to the classification review and approval noted earlier, the Commissioners are also responsible for ruling on appeals filed by applicants and employees, ruling on administrative reviews of applicants removed for background reasons, and conducting disciplinary appeals.

Columbus Public Schools: The Commission also oversees the classified employees of the Columbus Board of Education, according to the Ohio Revised Code. This includes approval of classification actions, appeals, and disciplinary hearings.

What We Don't Do

The Commission is not responsible for compensation, labor relations, benefits, or training. These areas are handled by the Human Resources Department.

As for hiring, while the Commission is responsible for job postings and evaluation of applicants' qualifications, the actual hiring decisions are made by each individual department.

Many people also confuse us with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission which is a State of Ohio agency that provides education and enforcement of Ohio's laws against discrimination. For more information about the Columbus Civil Service Commission, view our website at www.csc.columbus.gov.



Arrive on Time for Testing

If you are planning to take a test with the Civil Service Commission, please consider the following:

The exam is scheduled to **start** at the time indicated on your Notice of Examination letter, and it is Commission policy that candidates not be permitted into the test room after instructions have begun. We therefore strongly recommend that you plan to arrive at least 20 minutes before your assigned time so that you are not closed out of the test. This should afford you ample time to park **and**, for tests administered at the Beacon Building (50 West Gay Street), to check in with the guard in the main lobby. If you have not previously been to the test facility, we suggest that you familiarize yourself with the area, especially the parking options (if you plan to drive). A map is provided on the back of the Notice of Examination letter, but it is always wise to locate the building beforehand to avoid unnecessary delays.

In most cases, inclement weather or traffic conditions will not delay the start of the test, so if there is bad weather, or you become aware of traffic problems, you should leave for the test earlier than anticipated in order to arrive on time. If testing at the Beacon Building, do not park at a meter – you will not be permitted to leave the test to put money in a meter. Locate parking areas ahead of time and remember to bring money to pay for parking.

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No matter where the test is being administered, be sure to bring your "NOTICE OF EXAMINATION" letter and a picture ID. A valid driver's license works well, and in some cases is required for admission, so we recommend you have it with you. There may be additional documents required, so be sure to bring to the test anything else your Notice of Examination letter indicates you need (*examples: Diploma, Transcript, DD214, CDL*). If you do not have the documents required, you will not be allowed to take the test.

If you are testing at the Piedmont testing facility, you will not be required to pay for parking, nor are you required to check in with a guard. However, all other basic rules apply - you should still familiarize yourself with the area, the building location, and the parking areas; plan to arrive at least 20 minutes early (especially in bad weather or traffic); and bring all required documents and a picture ID.

If you disagree with an action of the Commission staff, you may file a Request for Review. The Request for Review form is available on the Commission website at www.csc.columbus.gov under Public Forms.

Arriving early eliminates the possibility of being closed out of the test and you are more likely to have a positive testing experience with the Commission.

Request for Reviews Process

A *Request for Review* is the Commission's procedure for applicants or employees whose application is rejected or who believe they have been adversely affected by an action of the Commission staff. (NOTE: This process is not used for applicants removed due to a background investigation; there is a separate process for these called background administrative reviews.) The Civil Service Rules and Regulations establish the request for review process and state that applicants must request a review by the Executive Director within ten (10) calendar days from the date the action was taken.

For example, Joan Smith received a rejection notice dated November 17, 2006. Joan felt that she met the minimum qualifications for the exam; however, she forgot to list one of her previous jobs that would help her meet the experience requirement. Joan must complete a *Request for Review* form and submit it and the additional information to the Commission by November 27, 2006 to meet the ten-day deadline. The Executive Director will review Joan's application and the Request for Review and a letter will be sent to Joan advising her of the decision. In this situation, Joan's Request for Review would be denied; Joan can clarify experience listed on her original application, but she cannot add jobs for consideration that were not included on her original application.

One of the Commission's performance standards tracks the response time for Requests for Review. These requests should be decided within 14 days. In 2006, the average response time has been 10 days.

Request for Review forms can be located on our website at www.csc.columbus.gov under Public Forms or you may also complete the form in person at our office in the Beacon Building at 50 West Gay Street during our office hours, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Firefighter Examination

The Firefighter Examination is one of the largest examinations the Civil Service Commission administers and this year was no exception. With over 6,000 applications submitted this has been a busy year! All three phases of the examination were administered to over 2,000 candidates this summer. The names of those who were successful on all three phases of the examination have been placed on the eligible list and may be considered for employment over the next two years. There are 1,340 names on the eligible list for the Division of Fire to consider. As part of this process, candidates scoring high enough to be considered will complete a thorough background investigation, a polygraph examination, a panel interview with Fire Division personnel, a vision test, a medical exam, and a cardiovascular stress test, all *before* being offered a position as a Firefighter with the City of Columbus. As Columbus grows and as current firefighters retire, the City of Columbus will prepare new firefighters in the Fire Training Academy. The Civil Service examination is the first step these candidates will take in fulfilling a dream of becoming a firefighter to protect life and property in the City of Columbus!

Did You Know?

- Over 17,000 Job Interest forms were received by the Commission in 2005. Nearly 90% of these were submitted through the Internet.
- 13,000 test announcement and job vacancy notices were mailed out to potential applicants in the job interest database in 2005.



Civil Service Commission

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www.csc.columbus.gov

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Meet Commission Employee Mike Maloney

A Columbus native, Mike received a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Toledo in 1989. Mike began working for the City in 1990 as an Income Tax Auditor in the Income Tax Division, where he worked for six years prior to accepting a position with the Civil Service Commission. Mike is currently a Personnel Analyst II assigned to safety forces testing, however, he also has several years experience with tests and classification work involving non-safety job classifications. Mike states that the most fascinating part of the job is learning about all City jobs and how that fits into the broader picture of providing local government services to the citizens of our community.



While away from work, Mike enjoys spending time with his daughters, Iyonna (8) and Maggie (5). Mike is an avid Buckeyes and Browns fan; in his spare time, he also enjoys cooking, camping, gardening, and reading or watching movies by the fireplace.

Upcoming Test - Police Communications Technician

The Police Communications Technician job class will be open for testing during the first quarter of 2007. This position is responsible for answering phone calls from citizens from regular and 911 emergency lines and for dispatching police officers. The Columbus Division of Police provides extensive training to new employees for this position. The Police Communications Technician position works in a 24-hour operation so different shifts are available. This is a very challenging, but rewarding career opportunity.

If you are interested in being notified by mail about the application dates for this upcoming civil service exam, please fill out a job interest form to be placed on our mailing list.

You can do this by visiting our website at www.csc.columbus.gov and clicking on "Job Interest" on the left side menu. You may also contact our office at (614) 645-8369 to have a job interest pack mailed to you.

*Happy Holidays
from the Civil Service
Commission Staff!!!*

